



To: City Manager Milton Dohoney, Jr.
cc: Mayor Mark Mallory
From: Vice Mayor Roxanne Qualls
Date: February 14, 2013
Re: Streetcar

The news this week that the construction bids for the streetcar tracks and stations have come in over budget, and that continued delays and cost increases may result, has raised serious concerns among streetcar supporters and opponents alike.

Whether people support or oppose the streetcar project, everyone has a vested interest in getting the most for our public dollars, and in having the highest confidence in the management of the project. While a council majority has continued to support the project, council has not given the administration a 'blank check.'

I understand that the administration is scrutinizing the bid documents to determine the basis for the construction cost estimates. If these new numbers are confirmed then I believe it is time for the city to step back, put the project through intensive value engineering, and bring the project's costs back into line. I strongly urge you to bring in a project manager and/or team that has a proven record in bringing major construction projects in on time and on budget.

The goal of this approach is to bring the streetcar into service in time for the All Star-Game and on budget.

As you know, I have supported the streetcar project since City Council first authorized it. I do so because it will ultimately connect the city's two largest employment centers – downtown with 60,000 employees and 15,000 residents, and the Uptown medical-university area with almost 60,000 employees and 50,000 residents. It is an economic development investment that will unlock value along the route by spurring residential, commercial and retail investment. The ultimate connection to the Uptown area is of significant importance because the streetcar investment will support the Uptown area's job growth that could be limited due to excessive parking demands and traffic congestion. Although Phase 1 does not reach Uptown, it is the ultimate goal of this undertaking.